



Youth-led Participatory Action Research (YPAR) Implementation Guides and Planning Tool

This implementation tool is intended to assist you as you reflect on your readiness and the readiness of your school or program to implement a YPAR program. Doing YPAR requires developing strategic research questions alongside youth participants using the four-step process, conducting a community demographic survey, and considering current and potential parent engagement and community partnerships.

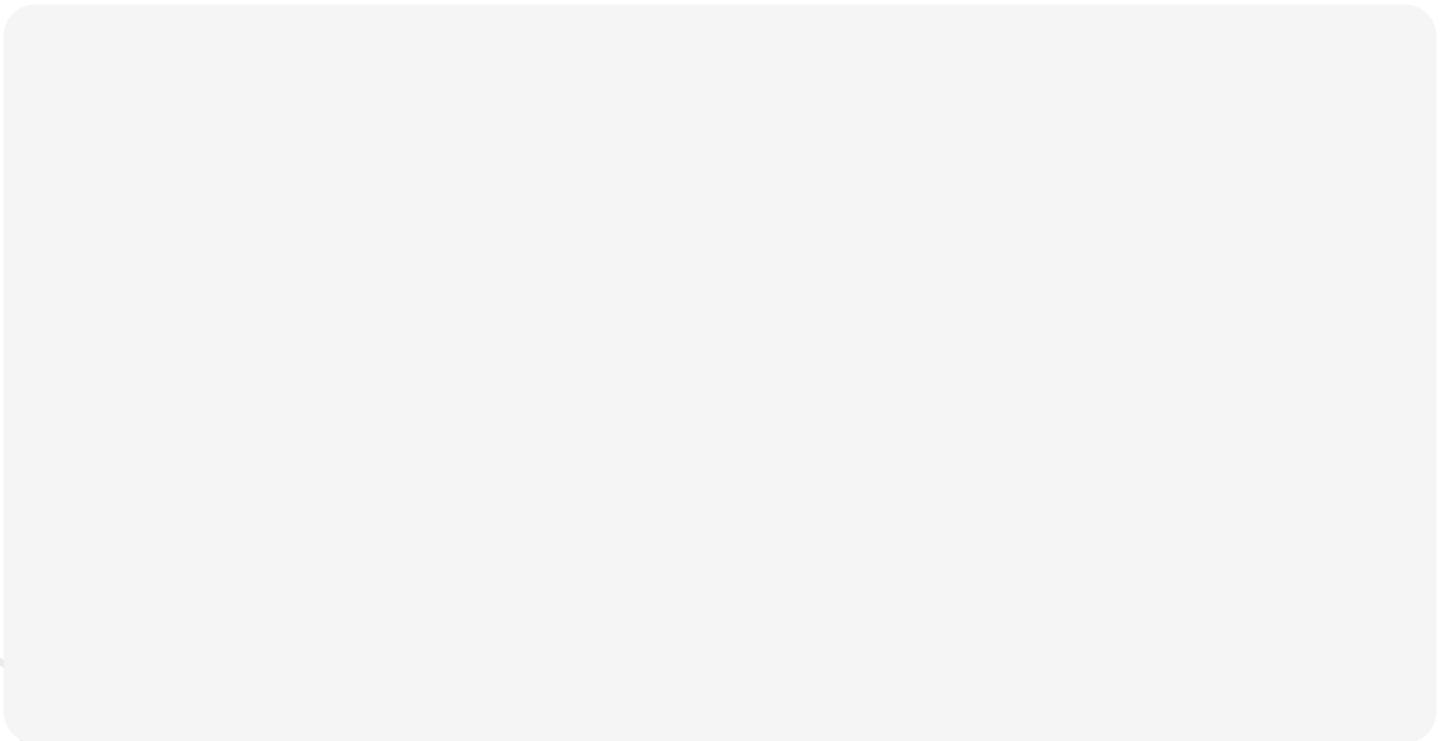
Further, this implementation tool includes an adapted cultural competence self-assessment checklist for self-reflection as you interact with others, especially youth. A school climate survey to understand critical dynamics relevant to youth conducting YPAR projects also accompanies the guide.

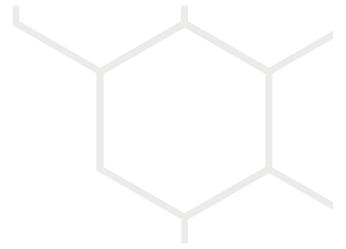
While this guide can be used to meet your specific needs, you are also encouraged to research additional tools and strategies to aid in achieving your YPAR goals. Remember, this is a guide, and your project should consider your school, community or program's unique circumstances and contexts, as well as the circumstances and contexts of your students.

The following pages guide you through the implementation steps and provide you lots of space to brainstorm your ideas!

YPAR Reflection Questions

How can you implement a youth-led participatory action research (YPAR) project at school, within a school district and/or through community partnerships?

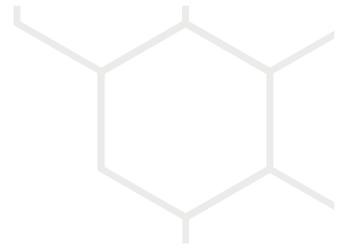
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What connections can be made between YPAR and problem-, place- and project-based learning?

What current YPAR projects, if any, exist within your context as a school, district or family?

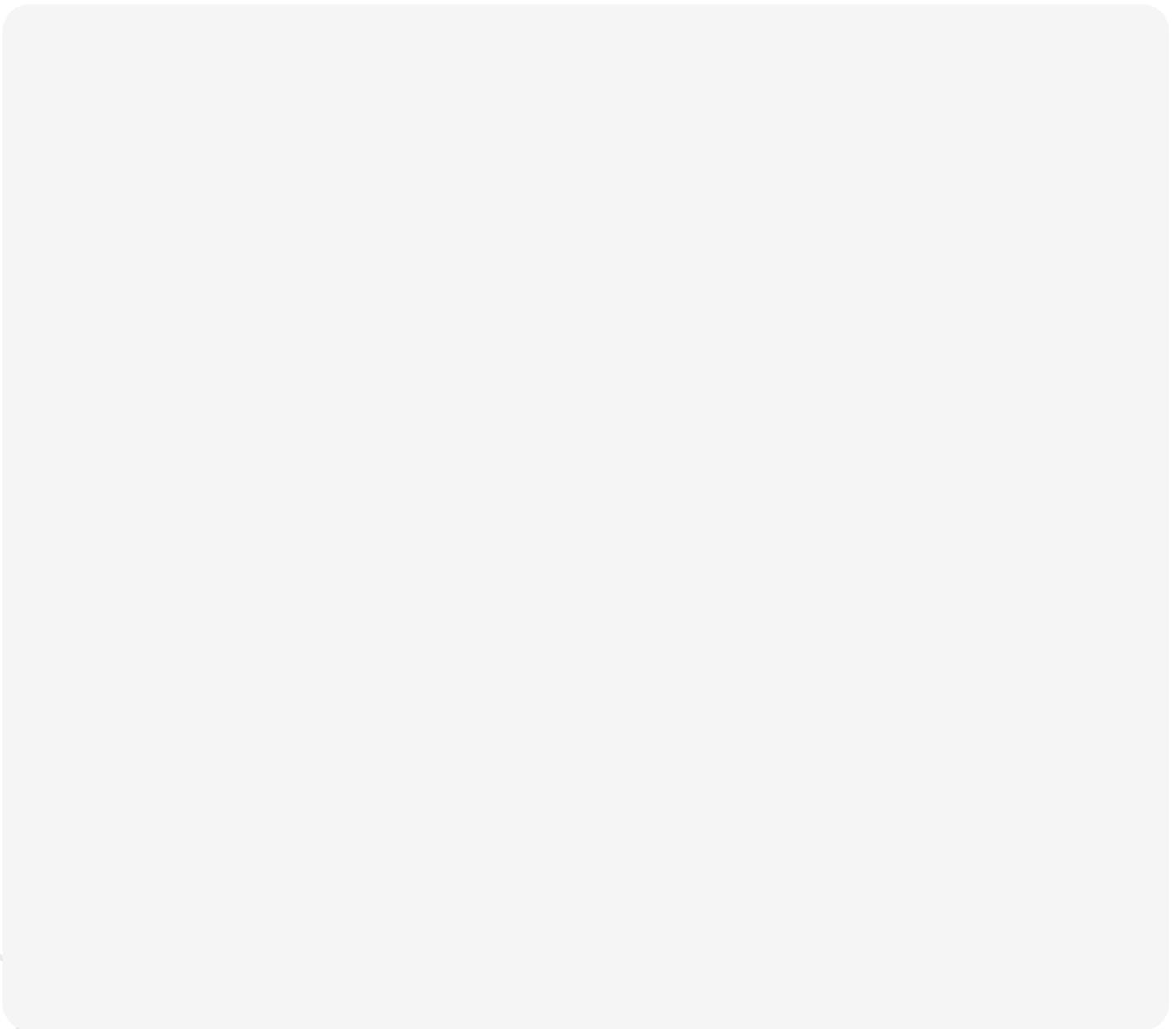


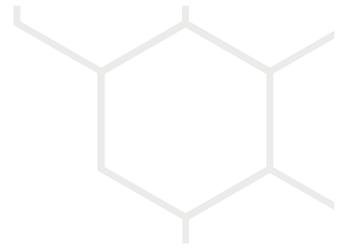


YPAR Project Planning

Step 1—Co-Construct Norms:

The first step to successfully completing a YPAR project is intentionally developing relationships between students and facilitators. Facilitators are any adult educator – teacher, mentor, adviser, etc. Relationship building must be ongoing and is essential considering the potential duration of the YPAR project. Together, establish norms under the agreement of all participants and utilize these norms for conflict resolution. Facilitators should intentionally revisit these norms for the duration of the project. Co-constructing norms empowers students, granting them decision-making autonomy. Use the space below to identify norms.

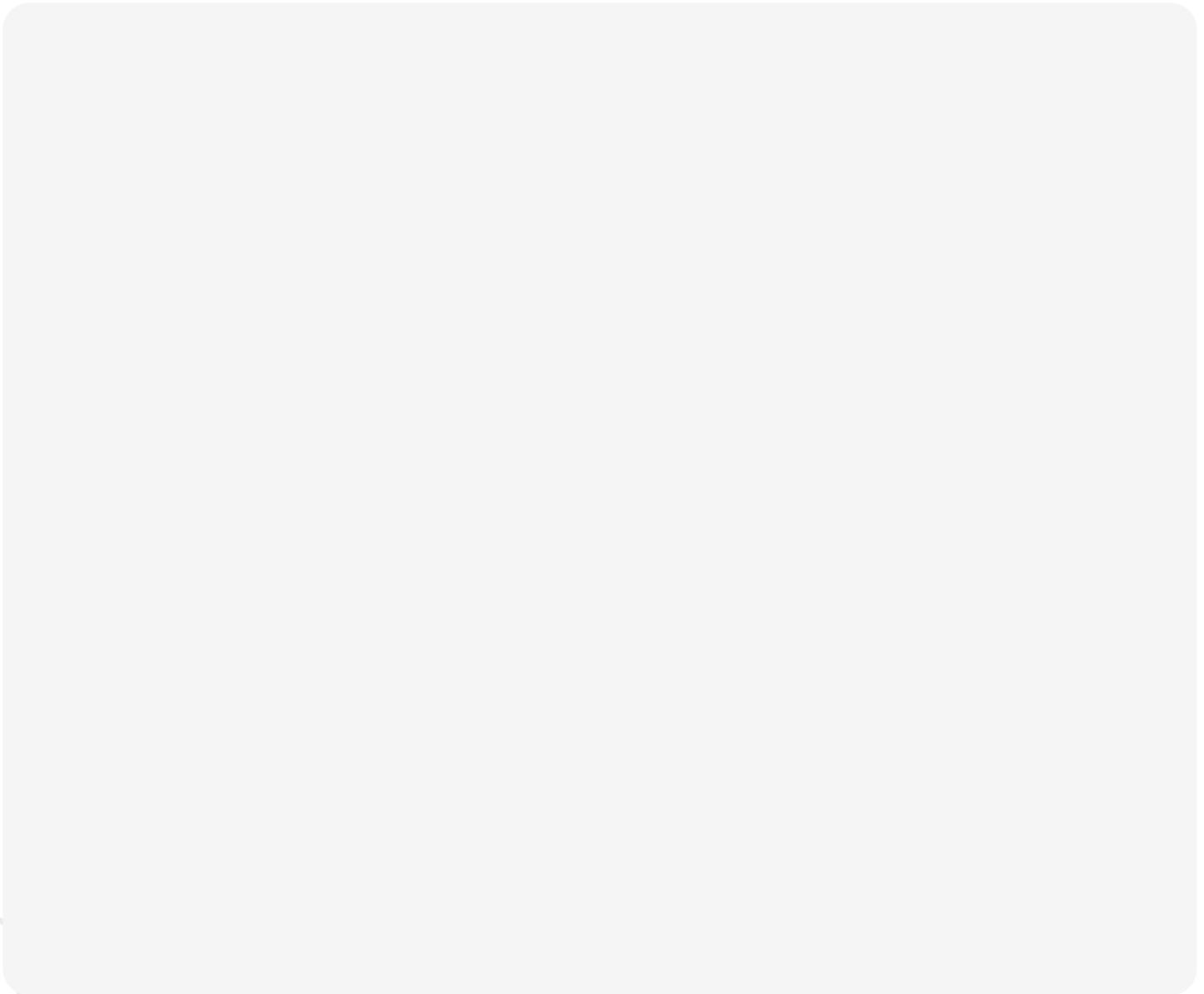
A large, empty, light gray rounded rectangle with a subtle drop shadow, intended for students to write down norms. It has a decorative line extending from its bottom-left corner.

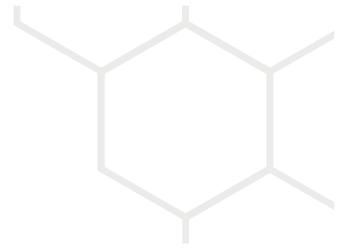


YPAR Project Planning

Step 2—Identify a Problem:

Intentional relationship building with students will provide facilitators with insight into students' interests. Following reflective conversations, students should brainstorm problems that they would like to research further. There are unlimited formats for the brainstorming process for individual students or small, midsize and large groups of students. After students have had time to brainstorm, then begins the process of narrowing down their focus to one particular research question based on a portion of a problem. This makes completing the project more tangible. Facilitators in this step are firm in allowing students to formulate their own ideas, focusing on providing guiding insight in lieu of providing step-by-step directives. Utilize the space below to brainstorm potential problems for research and investigation.

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YPAR Project Planning

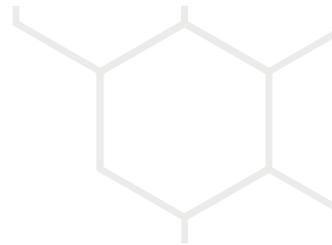
Step 3—Conducting Research:

After determining a research question either individually or within groups, students determine appropriate research methodology with the support of the YPAR facilitator. It is critical for the YPAR facilitator to guide students to research methods that are most appropriate for answering their research questions and articulating recommendations. The conducting research step of the YPAR process allows for students to learn how to describe, prepare and take immediate action steps.

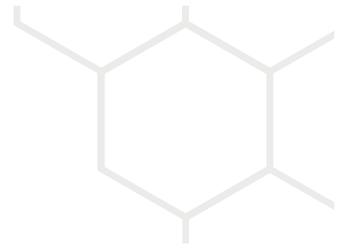
There are myriad qualitative, quantitative and mixed methodologies that students could be exposed to, including:

- Informational interview
- Issuing surveys
- Conducting interviews
- Focus groups
- Document analysis

Contemporary data collection procedures like employing the use of social media or creating a hashtag to obtain broader feedback for their questions and problem-solving can be leveraged as well. It is also critical within this step for facilitators to emphasize existing data sources from which students can draw information. Perhaps portions of students' questions can be answered by the historical context of the problem they selected, and the research question asked, while the YPAR process provides new information that is student-focused and community-based. What makes the YPAR process community-based is the intentionality around a particular problem that exists in said community. Thus, data collected from students, parents and community members is key. Finally, facilitators should compile and share resources that are readily available to students from multiple vantage points (e.g., databases, peer-reviewed articles, research equipment, qualitative or quantitative software).



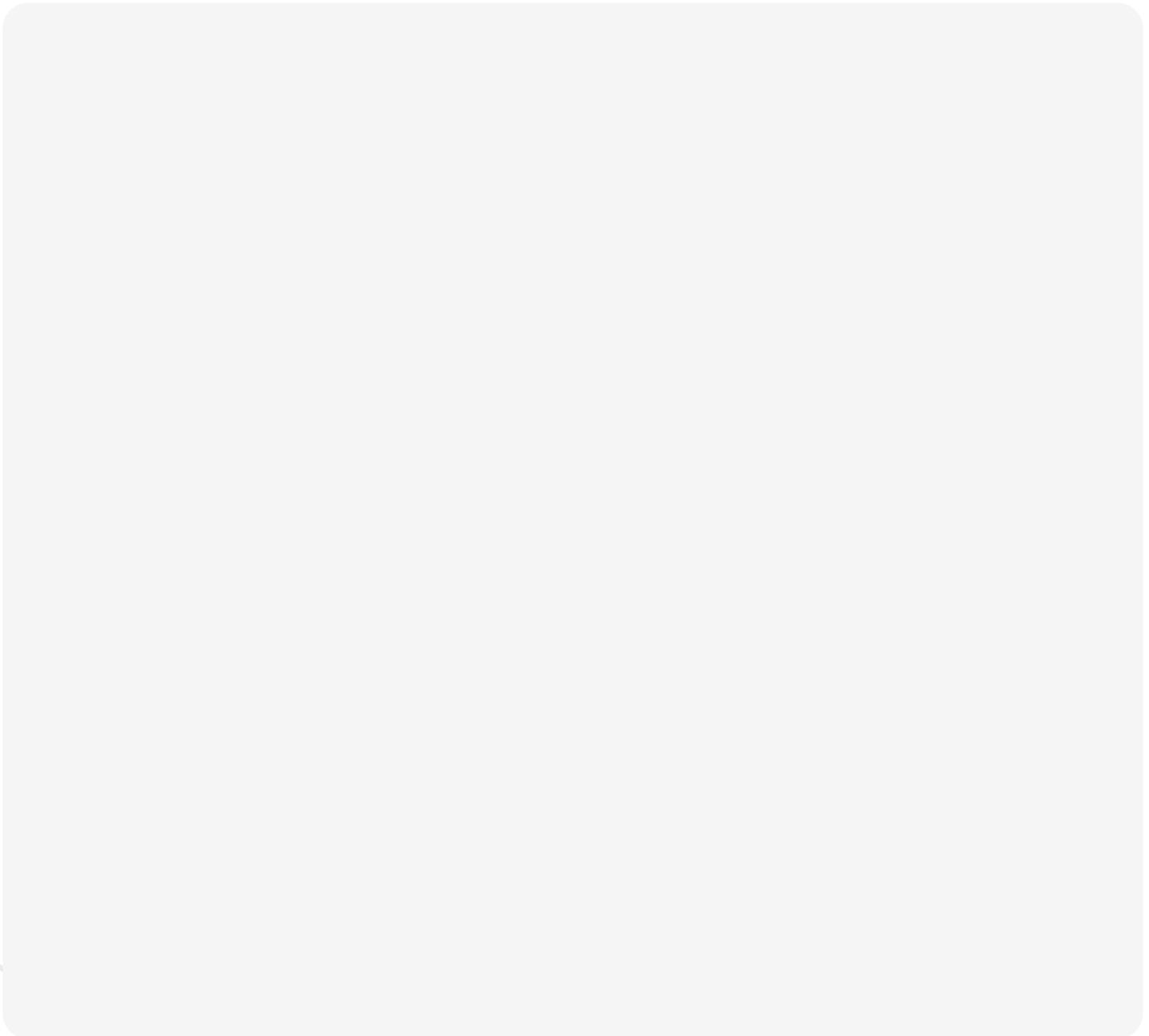
Step 3—Conducting Research:



YPAR Project Planning

Step 4—Present Your Work:

YPAR projects culminate in disseminating findings to a particular audience. Students have an opportunity to present their work by articulating the problem, question posed, research processes and proposed solutions to problems. This is both an opportunity for students to be creative in how their work is presented – leveraging multimedia tools like photos, videos or social media – and to celebrate the completion of their research projects with newfound and transferrable skills and knowledge for learning. Determine in the space below how you can disseminate your YPAR project work.

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Youth-led Participatory Action Research (YPAR) School and Community Demographic Survey¹

Using your prior knowledge and experience in the field, as well as the concepts, readings and research gained from the YPAR playbook, conduct a critical analysis of school- community relations where you live or work. The analysis is both a “case study” of your community as well as a professional “audit” of practices, policies and relationships. The purpose of the analysis is to help each student better understand how to collaborate in the collection and analysis of information pertinent to conducting a YPAR project. The analysis is also important for learning about and appreciating the community served by the school – its various populations, cultures and norms, as well as the resources that could be tapped to help students be successful.

Based on this assessment, students will highlight the school, community or program’s strength in community relations, and will also make recommendations for improvements where they are needed. Students are urged to provide leadership by suggesting specific steps that could be taken to improve areas of perceived weakness.

School name:

- Preschool
- Elementary
- Middle School
- High School

Is your school:

- a traditional public school
- a public charter school
- a private school
- a parochial school
- an online school
- an alternative school
- other (please identify)

Number of students enrolled in your school
(most recent count): _____

Racial/Ethnic make-up of student body
(% of total)

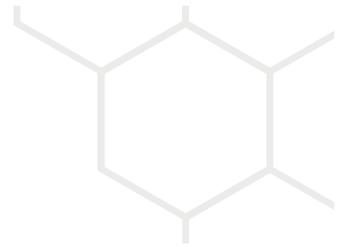
- _____ % Black/African American
- _____ % Asian
- _____ % Hispanic or Latino
- _____ % White
- _____ % Other

Free/reduced lunch count (% of student body)

Number of teachers/teaching faculty

Number of additional professional staff
(administrators, counselors, etc.):

¹ Adapted from School-Community Audit and Assessment Project Educational Leadership Constituent Council Standards 4.1, 4.4



Racial/Ethnic make-up of the faculty and professional staff (% of total)

- _____ % Black/African American
- _____ % Asian
- _____ % Hispanic or Latino
- _____ % White
- _____ % Other

Number of support staff (administrative assistants, secretaries, custodians, etc.):

Mission and/or vision statement of the building:

Does the mission or vision explicitly mention community or parent relations?

- Yes
- No

Provide some demographic information that helps frame an understanding of the larger organizational or district context.

School district/Chartering organization:

Location, county, or region:

Organization's (district/chartering organization) **vision or mission statement:**

Does the vision or mission explicitly mention community or parent relations?

- Yes
- No

If a school district or chartering organization, list the number of schools in the district or overseen by the chartering organization:

Elem. _____
 _____ # of students

Middle _____
 _____ # of students

High Sch. _____
 _____ # of students

Other _____
 _____ # of students



With what other similar educational organizations do you compete directly for students? Note the number of competing organizations by type below:

- _____ # Charter schools
 - _____ # Private schools
 - _____ # Parochial schools/Colleges
 - _____ # Online/home schools
 - _____ # Other
-

If a local public school district, does the district offer an adult/continuing/community education program?

- No
- Yes

If yes, check all programs offered:

- Adult high school completion
- English as a second language
- Adult basic education
- After school programs for children
- Leisure time programs for adults
- Preschool programs
- Summer programs for children
- Vocational education for adults
- Senior citizen program

Location of adult/community ed program:

- Separate building in district
- In school building/s

Provide some information about the larger community context that affects your school/program/department/college.

Name of the primary community(ies)/towns served by your school (program, etc.):

In what county(ies)?

Type of community(ies) served by the district/chartering agency, etc.

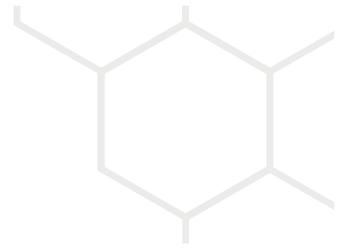
(check all that apply):

- Urban
- Suburban
- Rural

How interested/involved would you say local government leaders are in your school's (program's) success?

- Not interested/involved at all
- Somewhat
- Very

Population of the primary community:



Percentage of age groups living within that community:

_____ % 16-25

_____ % 26-45

_____ % 46-65

_____ % 66+

Adult education levels:

_____ % Less than H.S.

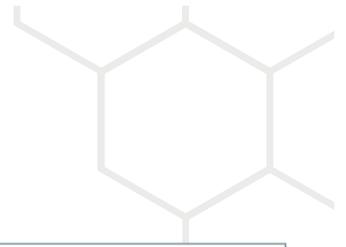
_____ % H.S. completion

_____ % Single-parent households

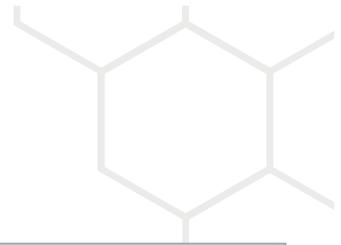
Median Income:

Briefly list or describe the following resources within the primary community. Provide significant information that helps create a “portrait” of the community, such as how many health facilities, parks, etc., and the name or variety of organizations, churches, businesses, etc.

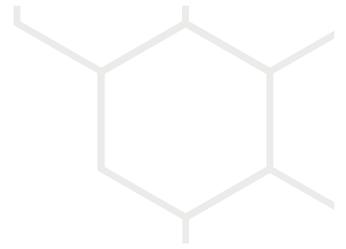
Public Safety (police, fire, EMS)	
Health Facilities	
Civic/Social/Service Organizations	



Faith-Based Community Agencies/Organizations	
Libraries/Museums	
Social, Recreation/Sports, Entertainment	
Parks	
Restaurants	

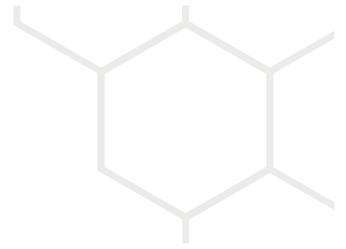


Banks/Financial Institutions	
Retail Businesses	
Industrial Businesses	
Other	

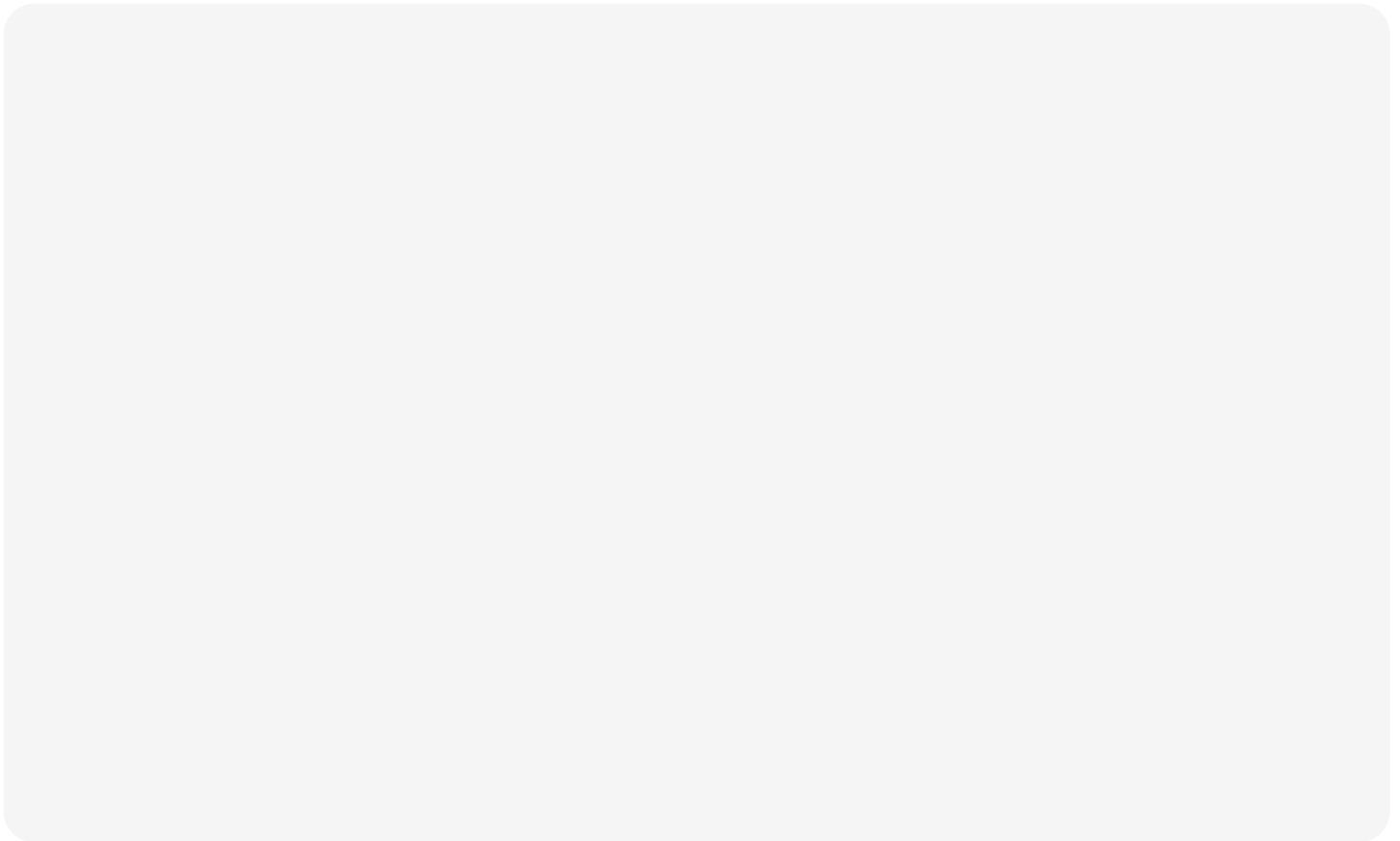
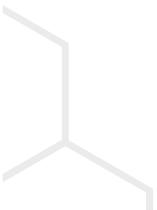


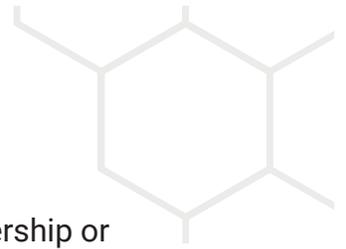
Describe two or three significant issues facing the primary community served by the school that is the subject of this survey.

Briefly describe one or two societal trends that contribute to or have impact upon the issues facing your school and the primary community it serves.



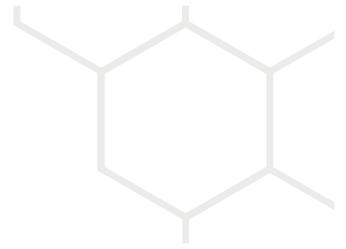
Based on what you have learned through your demographic study of the community, including education and income levels and resources within the community, as well as your experience with community members and families, briefly describe what you believe is the community's general access to and comfort level using technology and social media for disseminating information, communicating and advancing social relationships across the community. Briefly name a few appropriate uses of technology and social media you could envision being effective in your community to connect school, community and families.

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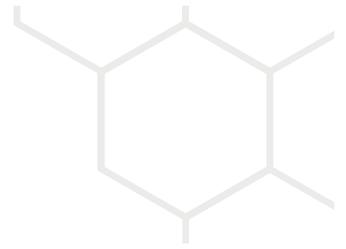


Indicate the level of activity of the following segments of the community in partnership or activities within your building or program. Check One:

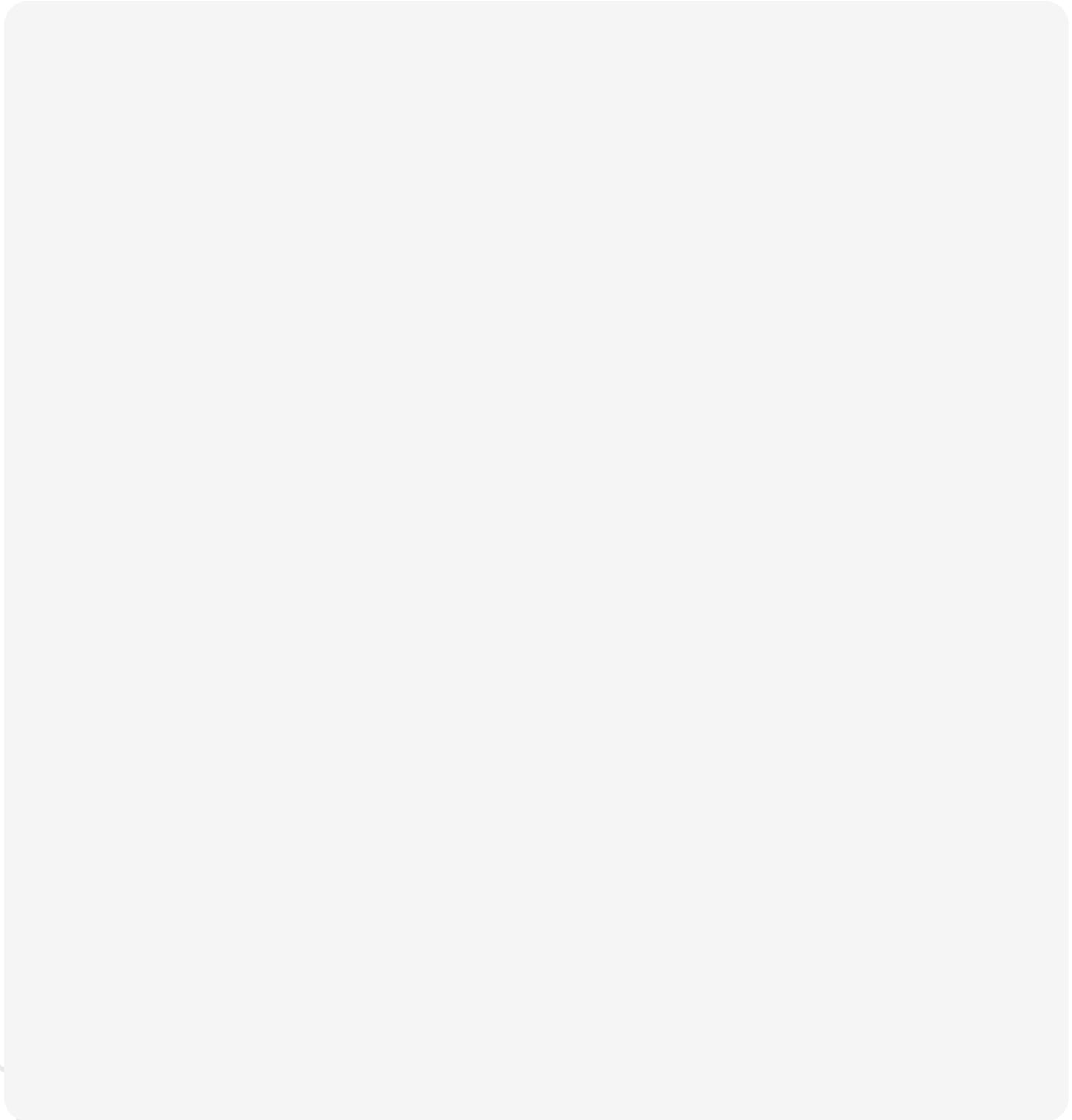
1 – Very Active	2 – Somewhat Active	3 – Not Active	4 – Don't know	1	2	3	4
Families of students you serve in multiple types of partnerships and activities				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Residents in the school attendance area without children in school				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Senior citizens				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Adults whose primary language is other than English (whether parents or not)				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Persons representing business:							
Retail (dept. stores, etc)				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Commercial (banks, real estate)				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Service (restaurants, cleaners, shoe repair, beauty salons, etc.)				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entertainment (live theater, movies, sports, exhibitions, etc.)				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Persons representing service clubs/organizations				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Persons representing city government departments (mayor, council, city mgr.)				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parks and Recreation				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Police Department				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fire Department				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Library				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Persons representing service organizations/agencies:							
Public Health Department				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Department of Social Services				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Counseling/Mental Health Services				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hospitals/Clinics				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2-1-1 Information Services				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



1 – Very Active	2 – Somewhat Active	3 – Not Active	4 – Don't know	1	2	3	4
Persons representing cultural institutions:							
Museums				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professional artists, musicians, etc.				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Persons representing the media				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clergy				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Persons representing Regional Service Agencies (e.g., ISDs, RESAs)				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Persons representing local higher education institutions:							
Community Colleges				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Universities				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vocational Training Institutions				<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Attach a reference list to your completed demographic survey that includes all sources you consulted. This includes documents and websites visited, as well as individuals you contacted for information if applicable. Be sure to include their names and titles.

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Cultural Competence Self-Assessment Checklist

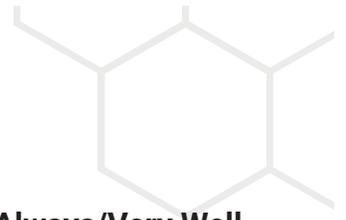
Before engaging in a YPAR project, this self-assessment is intended for you to explore your cultural competence by considering your skills, knowledge and awareness when interacting with others. This assessment focuses on race, ethnicity and ancestry.

Read each entry in the Awareness, Knowledge and Skills sections. Place a checkmark in the appropriate column. At the end of each section, add up the number of checks you have in that column. The rating scale is to help in identifying areas of strength and areas in need of further development before and during your engagement with a YPAR project.

Cultural competence is a continuous learning process. You are not required to share your answers unless you choose to do so.

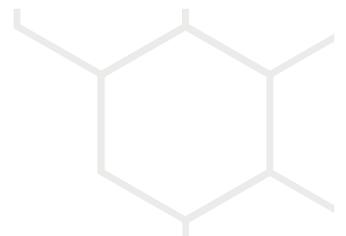
1 – Never 2 – Sometimes/Occasionally 3 – Fairly Often/Pretty Well 4 – Always/Very Well

Awareness	1	2	3	4
Value Diversity I view human difference as positive and a cause for celebration.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Know Myself I have a clear sense of my own ethnic, cultural and racial identity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Share My Culture I am aware that in order to learn more about others I need to understand and be prepared to share my own culture.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be Aware of Areas of Discomfort I am aware of my discomfort when I encounter differences in race, colour, religion, sexual orientation, language, and ethnicity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Check My Assumptions I am aware of the assumptions that I hold about people of cultures different from my own.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Challenge My Stereotypes I am aware of my stereotypes as they arise and have developed personal strategies for reducing the harm they cause.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reflect on How My Culture Informs My Judgement I am aware of how my cultural perspective influences my judgement about what are 'appropriate', 'normal', or 'superior' behaviors, values, and communication styles.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



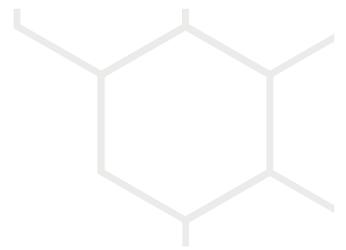
1 – Never 2 – Sometimes/Occasionally 3 – Fairly Often/Pretty Well 4 – Always/Very Well

Awareness	1	2	3	4
<p>Accept Ambiguity</p> <p>I accept that in cross cultural situations there can be uncertainty and that uncertainty can make me anxious. It can also mean that I do not respond quickly and take the time needed to get more information.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Be Curious</p> <p>I take any opportunity to put myself in places where I can learn about difference and create relationships.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Aware of My Privilege If I am White</p> <p>If I am a White person working with an Aboriginal person or Person of Color, I understand that I will likely be perceived as a person with power and racial privilege, and that I may not be seen as ‘unbiased’ or as an ally.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Aware of Social Justice Issues</p> <p>I’m aware of the impact of the social context on the lives of culturally diverse population, and how power, privilege and social oppression influence their lives.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge	1	2	3	4
<p>Gain From My Mistakes</p> <p>I will make mistakes and will learn from them.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Assess The Limits Of My Knowledge</p> <p>I will recognize that my knowledge of certain cultural groups is limited and commit to creating opportunities to learn more.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Ask Questions</p> <p>I will recognize that my knowledge of certain cultural groups is limited and commit to creating opportunities to learn more.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Acknowledge The Importance Of Difference</p> <p>I know that differences in color, culture, ethnicity, etc. are important parts of an individual’s identity that they value and so do I. I will not hide behind the claim of “color blindness.”</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Understand The Influence Culture Can Have</p> <p>I recognize that cultures change over time and can vary from person to person, as does attachment to culture.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



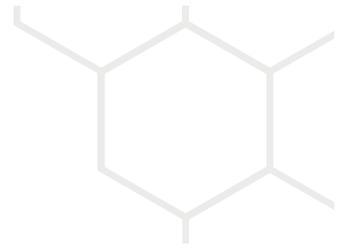
1 – Never 2 – Sometimes/Occasionally 3 – Fairly Often/Pretty Well 4 – Always/Very Well

Knowledge	1	2	3	4
<p>Commit To Lifelong Learning</p> <p>I recognize that achieving cultural competence involves a commitment to learning over a lifetime.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Understand the Impact of Racism, Sexism, Homophobia</p> <p>I recognize that stereotypical attitudes and discriminatory actions can dehumanize even encourage violence against individuals because of their membership in groups which are different from myself.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Know My Limitations</p> <p>I continue to develop my capacity for assessing areas where there are gaps in my knowledge.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Awareness of Multiple Social Identities</p> <p>I recognize that people have intersecting multiple identities drawn from race, sex, religion, ethnicity, etc and the importance of each of these identities vary from person to person.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Intercultural and Intracultural Differences</p> <p>I acknowledge both intercultural and intracultural differences.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Point Of Reference To Assess Appropriate Behavior</p> <p>I'm aware that everyone has a "culture" and my own "culture" should not be regarded as a point of reference to assess which behavior is appropriate or inappropriate.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skills	1	2	3	4
<p>Adapt To Different Situations</p> <p>I am developing ways to interact respectfully and effectively with individuals and groups.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Challenge Discriminatory and/or Racist Behavior</p> <p>I can effectively intervene when I observe others behaving in racist and/or discriminatory manner.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Communicate Across Cultures</p> <p>I am able to adapt my communication style to effectively communicate with people who communicate in ways that are different from my own.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



1 – Never 2 – Sometimes/Occasionally 3 – Fairly Often/Pretty Well 4 – Always/Very Well

Skills	1	2	3	4
<p>Seek Out Situations To Expand My Skills</p> <p>I seek out people who challenge me to maintain and increase the cross-cultural skills I have.</p>	○	○	○	○
<p>Become Engaged</p> <p>I am actively involved in initiatives, small or big, that promote understanding among members of diverse groups.</p>	○	○	○	○
<p>Act Respectfully In Cross-Cultural Situations</p> <p>I can act in ways that demonstrate respect for the culture and beliefs of others.</p>	○	○	○	○
<p>Practice Cultural Protocols</p> <p>I am learning about and put into practice the specific cultural protocols and practices which necessary for my work.</p>	○	○	○	○
<p>Act as an Ally</p> <p>My colleagues who are Aboriginal, immigrants or People of Color consider me an ally and know that I will support them with culturally appropriate ways.</p>	○	○	○	○
<p>Be Flexible</p> <p>I work hard to understand the perspectives of others and consult with my diverse colleagues about culturally respectful and appropriate courses of action.</p>	○	○	○	○
<p>Be Adaptive</p> <p>I know and use a variety of relationship building skills to create connections with people who are different from me.</p>	○	○	○	○
<p>Recognize My Own Cultural Biases</p> <p>I can recognize my own cultural biases in a given situation and I'm aware not to act out based on my biases.</p>	○	○	○	○
<p>Be Aware of Within-Groups Differences</p> <p>I'm aware of within-group differences and I would not generalize a specific behavior presented by an individual to the entire cultural community.</p>	○	○	○	○



School Climate Checklist

1 – Already Doing This 2 – Could Do This Easily 3 – This Will Take Time 4 – This Will Be Hard

	1	2	3	4
Engage in deliberate efforts to create positive school climates.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prioritize the use of evidence-based prevention strategies, such as tiered supports.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promote social and emotional learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide regular training and supports to all school personnel.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collaborate with local agencies and other stakeholders.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensure that any school-based law enforcement officers' roles focus on improving school safety and reducing inappropriate referrals to law enforcement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The school reports to parents about student progress and how teachers, parents, and community member can work together to make improvements.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Involve families, students, and school personnel, and communicate regularly and clearly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use proactive, data-driven, and continuous efforts, including gathering feedback from families to prevent, identify, reduce, and eliminate discriminatory discipline and unintended consequences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use proactive, data-driven, and continuous efforts, including gathering feedback from students to prevent, identify, reduce, and eliminate discriminatory discipline and unintended consequences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use proactive, data-driven, and continuous efforts, including gathering feedback from teachers to prevent, identify, reduce, and eliminate discriminatory discipline and unintended consequences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use proactive, data-driven, and continuous efforts, including gathering feedback from school personnel to prevent, identify, reduce, and eliminate discriminatory discipline and unintended consequences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

